



# Effectively Engaging in the Permitting Process

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Water  
Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System  
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# Public Process

DEC provides resources to facilitate early involvement in the permitting process

- Permit Issuance Plan
- Early Notification Letters
- Public Notices





# Commenting

The purpose of providing comments is to inform the agency of additional considerations, provide general feedback, and correct errors or omissions

- Helpful comments
- Less helpful comments
- Personal observations





# Helpful Comments

*“Our tribe fishes for herring in this area. Discharge occurring between March 1 and May 30 would greatly impact herring spawning, egg incubation, and larvae hatching and dispersal.”*





# Less Helpful Comments

*“The engine noise is too loud.”*





# Personal Observations

*“I’ve lived here for 20 years and worked in power plants my whole life. I can tell the facility doesn’t always use the retention pond, and I know that direct discharge often occurs based on water levels. I have photos to support this.”*





# Reviewing Sample Comments

*“Water quality based effluent limits were developed using human health criteria for fish consumption of 6.5 grams per day; however, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services has estimated that some villages may consume more than 10 times that. Point Hope consumes high amounts of fish, and fishes in the vicinity of the outfall.”*





# Reviewing Sample Comments

Comment for a wastewater treatment plant permit:  
*“Water runs off the fuel tank farm into the river.”*





# Reviewing Sample Comments

*“The area south of the outfall might be used for shellfish farming.”*





# Reviewing Sample Comments

*“Since there was so little snowfall this year, ice is thicker than normal and that may delay break-up. Thicker ice is prone to jamming, which causes flooding if meltwater can flow downstream. The wastewater lagoon is likely to overflow. The lagoon should be bigger or relocated, or this permit needs to account for the discharge of untreated wastewater during high ice buildup or rain events.”*





# Reviewing Sample Comments

*“We did not receive a copy of the public notice until 17 days into the 30 day comment period, due to weather and rural mail carrier delays. There were no advertisements of the public notice in local and readily accessible newspapers, only in city papers. We therefore request that you extend the comment period so that we may have additional time to more thoroughly review the draft permit and provide additional comments.”*





# Thank you!

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